



MATT MCCLAIN/THE WASHINGTON POST

After House passage of the tax bill, Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) said, “This is a good day for workers . . . and a great day for growth.”

Tax overhaul all but done despite hitch

TRUMP POISED FOR 1ST BIG LEGISLATIVE WIN

House will vote again to resolve conflict with Senate

BY JEFF STEIN AND DAMIAN PALETTA

Republicans are on the verge of passing the most significant overhaul of the tax code since 1986, with the Senate preparing to pass the GOP plan Tuesday night and the House ready to send the measure to President Trump on Wednesday morning.

The sprawling measure would cut the corporate tax rate dramatically, and the vast majority of households would see their income taxes go down in 2018, with the largest savings going to the wealthy. The bill also proposes revising nearly every part of the tax system by restructuring income tax rates and expanding some popular deductions while paring back others.

Republicans appear to have the votes they need to pass the measure through the Senate, after holdout Republican Sens. Marco Rubio (Fla.) and Bob Corker (Tenn.) said last week that they would support it.

“Congress is standing at the doorstep of a historic opportunity,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) said Tuesday as he announced the upcoming vote. “Here’s what we set out to do: Take money out of Washington’s pockets and put it back in the pockets of middle-class Americans.”

House Republicans thought they had finished their work when they passed a version of the tax bill Tuesday afternoon. The measure passed 227 to 203, with all but

TAX BILL CONTINUED ON A12

The GOP tax bill was the easy part. The next debate could be much uglier.

BY HEATHER LONG

The Republican overhaul of the tax code sets the stage for years of politically fraught debate over what the government should provide for its citizens and how much it should demand in taxes.

President Trump and Republicans in Congress are celebrating the \$1.5 trillion legislation as a big tax cut for workers and businesses. And for the time being, it is that — 80 percent of the country will pay lower taxes

next year.

But the short-term gains come with a cost: The legislation also makes the country’s debt problem even worse, in all likelihood forcing policymakers in coming years to make difficult decisions about spending cuts, tax increases or both.

The debate could touch on some of the most value-laden questions facing the nation — what type of financial security to provide the elderly, what safety-net services should be offered to the poor, and how much the

government should try to shrink economic inequality.

The challenging landscape is partly the result of choices Republicans made with their tax bill and partly the result of deeper economic forces in the economy. The GOP decided to cut taxes without offsetting spending cuts, driving up the deficit.

But the country is also going through a profound demographic shift in which millions of baby boomers are retiring from the

DEBATE CONTINUED ON A13

Prepared to fight

President Trump’s lawyer is ready for a constitutional battle over a defamation suit. **A6**

Misconduct on Capitol Hill

Consequences of harassment vary widely, which a bipartisan committee is addressing. **A7**

Trump’s stocks obsession

The president has increasingly equated his success in office with the rising markets. **A13**

BY DAMIAN PALETTA AND PHILIP RUCKER

President Trump is poised to achieve what has eluded him throughout his tumultuous first year in office — a major legislative victory.

With the expected passage in Congress on Wednesday of a tax-code overhaul that also dismantles part of the Affordable Care Act, Trump hopes to shed the label of legislative loser. But

whether the probable win could help him pass other agenda items in 2018 and catapult him onto firmer political ground ahead of the midterm elections is an open question.

Trump’s tax-cuts achievement could be compromised by the unpopularity not only of the legislation itself but also of his own performance in office. Recent polls show Trump’s approval ratings reaching new lows, with a

TRUMP CONTINUED ON A12

Democrats are unlikely to force vote on DACA

BY ED O’KEEFE

Democrats are backing away from a pledge to force a vote this month over the fate of thousands of undocumented immigrants brought to this country as children, angering activists but probably averting the threat of a government shutdown at a critical moment in spending negotiations with Republicans and President Trump.

With a deadline of midnight Friday to pass spending legislation, dozens of Democrats had vowed to withhold support if Republicans refused to allow a vote on a measure, known as the Dream Act, that would allow roughly 1.2 million immigrants to stay legally in the United States.

But a group of vulnerable

DACA CONTINUED ON A4

Immigrants seek abortions
Two undocumented teenagers in custody may succeed. **A4**

Shelly Simonds (D) 11,608 | David Yancey (R) 11,607

One vote shifts power in the Virginia legislature

BY GREGORY S. SCHNEIDER

NEWPORT NEWS — The balance of power in Virginia’s legislature turned on a single vote in a recount Tuesday that flipped a seat in the House of Delegates from Republican to Democratic, leaving control of the lower chamber evenly split.

The outcome, which reverberated across Virginia, ends 17 years of GOP control of the House and forces Republicans into a rare episode of power sharing with Democrats that will refashion the political landscape in Richmond.

It was the culmination of last month’s Democratic wave that had diminished Republican power in purple Virginia.

Democrat Shelly Simonds emerged from the recount as the apparent winner in the 94th House District, seizing the seat from Republican David Yancey. A three-judge panel still must certify the results, an event scheduled for Wednesday.

Of the 23,215 votes cast in the district on Election Day, Yancey held a lead of just 10 votes going into Tuesday’s recount.

The makeup of Virginia’s House of Delegates by party entering the 2017 Fall elections . . .

66 REPUBLICANS
34 DEMOCRATS

. . . and following Democrat Shelly Simonds’s recount victory in Newport News on Tuesday.

50 REPUBLICANS
50 DEMOCRATS

But five hours later, after a painstaking counting overseen by local elections officials and the clerk of court, Yancey’s lead narrowed — and then reversed.

The final tally: 11,608 for Simonds to 11,607 for Yancey.

“I knew it was going to be a roller-coaster ride, and the counts were going to change and votes were going to shift around. But I had faith in the system and final outcome,” said Simonds, who stayed off Twitter to avoid anxiety. “This is part of a huge wave election in Virginia where voters came out in record numbers to force a change in Virginia, and I’m really proud to be part of that change.”

Power sharing in the House of Delegates is an awkward exercise; the last such arrangement was in 1998. Committee chairs have to be negotiated, as does the person who will serve as speaker. With the parties split 50-50, there is no mechanism to break ties, and any legislation short of 51 votes does not advance.

Republicans hold a slight 21-to-19 edge in the state Senate, but

RECOUNT CONTINUED ON A14



JULIA RENDLEMAN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Democrat Shelly Simonds defeated Del. David Yancey (R) in Tuesday’s recount of the Virginia 94th House District race. “This is part of a huge wave election in Virginia where voters came out in record numbers to force a change,” she says.

Rare setbacks in president’s effort to alter the judiciary

BY PHILIP RUCKER, JOSH DAWSEY AND ASHLEY PARKER

The collapse of three of President Trump’s judicial nominations in the span of a week has embarrassed the White House, revealed weaknesses in its vetting process and threatened to cause Senate Republicans to apply more scrutiny to the president’s picks.

In their push to fill scores of vacancies on federal circuit and district courts at the historic pace demanded by Trump, White House officials have overlooked vulnerabilities in the backgrounds of some nominees. Critics allege that White House counsel Donald McGahn, who is overseeing the process, has sacrificed traditional qualifications for ideological purity and youth.

But the downfalls of three nominees — Jeff Mateer, Matthew Petersen and Brett Talley — are also

JUDGES CONTINUED ON A6

IN THE NEWS



JEFF J MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES

Catalonia schism The region’s populace is more divided than ever ahead of another vote on future relations with Spain. **A8**

Medical landmark The Food and Drug Administration approved a gene therapy for an inherited form of childhood blindness. **A3**

THE NATION

The Environmental Protection Agency is canceling a \$120,000 “media tracking” contract it recently signed with a Republican public affairs and opposition-research firm. **A2**
A military court is grappling with the complications of trying a retired Army general on multiple rape charges decades after the alleged assaults were said to have occurred. **A2**
The National Transportation Safety Board said the train that derailed Monday between Seattle and Portland

was going more than twice the posted speed limit. **A3**
The Treasury Department paid about \$174,000 over five years to settle claims that included allegations of sexual harassment or sex discrimination in House offices. **A7**
Lawsuits challenging the repeal of net neutrality rules are likely to make two kinds of arguments, analysts say. **A14**
The government lifted a moratorium on funding for research into making certain viruses more virulent and transmissible. **A14**

THE WORLD

China is left guessing what an “America First” policy would mean after President Trump’s national security address offered few new details. **A9**
Saudi Arabia said it intercepted a ballistic missile fired at its capital by a rebel group in Yemen. **A9**

THE ECONOMY

Facebook began rolling out broad new facial-recognition features on its social network. **A10**
The Bureau of Labor Statistics said the retail industry appeared to push women out last year while offering men more opportunities. **A10**

THE REGION

A youth shot in Southeast Washington on Monday was killed in a robbery of his Air Jordan sneakers, police said. **B1**
Maryland Democratic lawmakers plan to propose a bill to increase dedicated funding for Metro without a tax increase. **B1**
A federal appeals court ruled that declining ridership on the Washington area’s subway system does not require Maryland to update the Purple Line’s environmental study, allowing construction on the 16-mile light-rail line to continue. **B2**

INSIDE



FOOD

Simply merry Make-ahead breakfast recipes keep Christmas morning relaxing. **E1**

STYLE

Elf off the shelf Parents are creating elaborate scenarios for the yuletide sprite. **C1**

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